

Appl. No. 10/692,572

Attorney Docket No. 10541-1894

**I. Listing of Claims**

1. (Currently Amended) A modular airbag door assembly for mounting to an instrument panel including a substrate, the modular door assembly comprising:

an airbag chute having a front side and a rear side and defining an opening extending therethrough;

a door panel pivotally mounted to said front side of said airbag chute and covering said opening;

said airbag door assembly further including a plurality of studs extending from said rear side of said airbag chute, said studs adapted to allow said airbag door assembly to be mounted to ~~[[a]]~~ the substrate with said rear side of said chute being positioned toward a front side of the substrate; and

a seal extending ~~[[over]]~~ around ends of both an outer periphery of said airbag chute and an outer periphery of said door panel to seal said outer periphery of said airbag chute and said outer periphery of said door panel and to secure said door panel in a closed position, wherein a portion of said seal is configured to be secured in position by being pinched between said rear side of said airbag chute and said front side of the substrate.

2. Canceled.

3. Canceled.

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4. (Original) The modular airbag door assembly of claim 1 further including a seal mounted to said rear side of said airbag chute to provide a seal between said rear side of said airbag chute and a front side of a substrate to which the modular airbag door assembly is to be mounted.

5. (Currently Amended) An instrument panel for an automobile passenger compartment comprising:

a substrate having an outer surface and an inner surface and defining an opening extending therethrough;

a modular airbag door assembly mounted to said outer surface of said substrate, said modular airbag door assembly including an airbag chute having a front side and a rear side and defining an opening extending therethrough and a door panel having a front surface and being pivotally mounted to said front side of said airbag chute and covering said opening mounted to said substrate to secure said airbag door assembly onto said outer surface of said substrate;

an airbag device mounted to said portions of said airbag chute that extend through said opening; and

a seal extending ~~[[over]]~~ around both an outer periphery of said airbag chute and an outer periphery of said door panel to seal ~~together between~~ said outer periphery of said airbag chute and said outer periphery of said door panel and to secure said door panel in a closed position, wherein said airbag device having means to force open said door panel, wherein a portion of said



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seal is secured in position by being pinched between said rear side of said airbag chute and said outer surface of said substrate.

6. Canceled.

7. Canceled.

8. Canceled.

9. (Previously Presented) The instrument panel of claim 5 further including a seal positioned between said outer surface of said substrate and said rear side of said airbag chute.

10. (Previously Presented) The instrument panel of claim 5 wherein said door panel is formed from metal and said substrate is formed of plastic.

11. (Original) The instrument panel of claim 10 wherein said door panel has stiffening ribs formed therein.

12. (Previously Presented) The instrument panel of claim 5 wherein said door panel includes a top flap portion that is secured to said front side of said airbag chute.

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13. (Previously Presented) The instrument panel of claim 5 further including a skin covering extending over said substrate.

14. (Original) The instrument panel of claim 13 wherein said skin covering includes a pre-weakened pattern outlining an outer periphery of said door panel, said pre-weakened pattern providing a break point to allow a controlled portion of said skin covering immediately over said modular airbag door assembly to break away upon deployment of said air bag device, said skin providing no external indicia of the air bag device located beneath.

15. (Original) The instrument panel of claim 13 further including foam positioned between said skin covering and said substrate.

16. (Original) The instrument panel of claim 15 wherein said substrate includes an outwardly extending ridge formed around portions of said opening within said substrate to provide a tear initiator for said foam during deployment of said airbag device.

17 – 20. Canceled.

21. Canceled.



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